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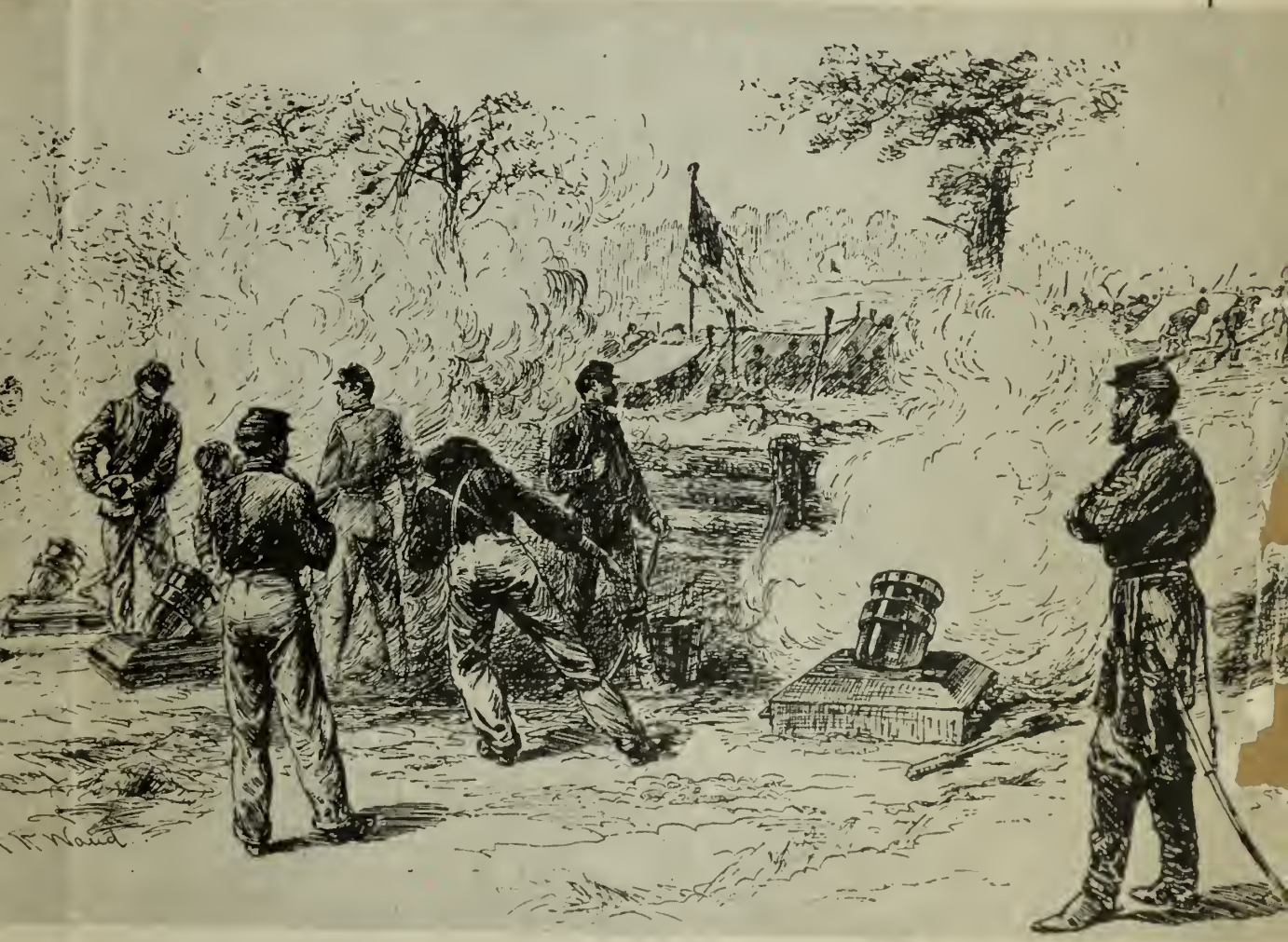

NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD PARKS

TOUR IN VIRGINIA

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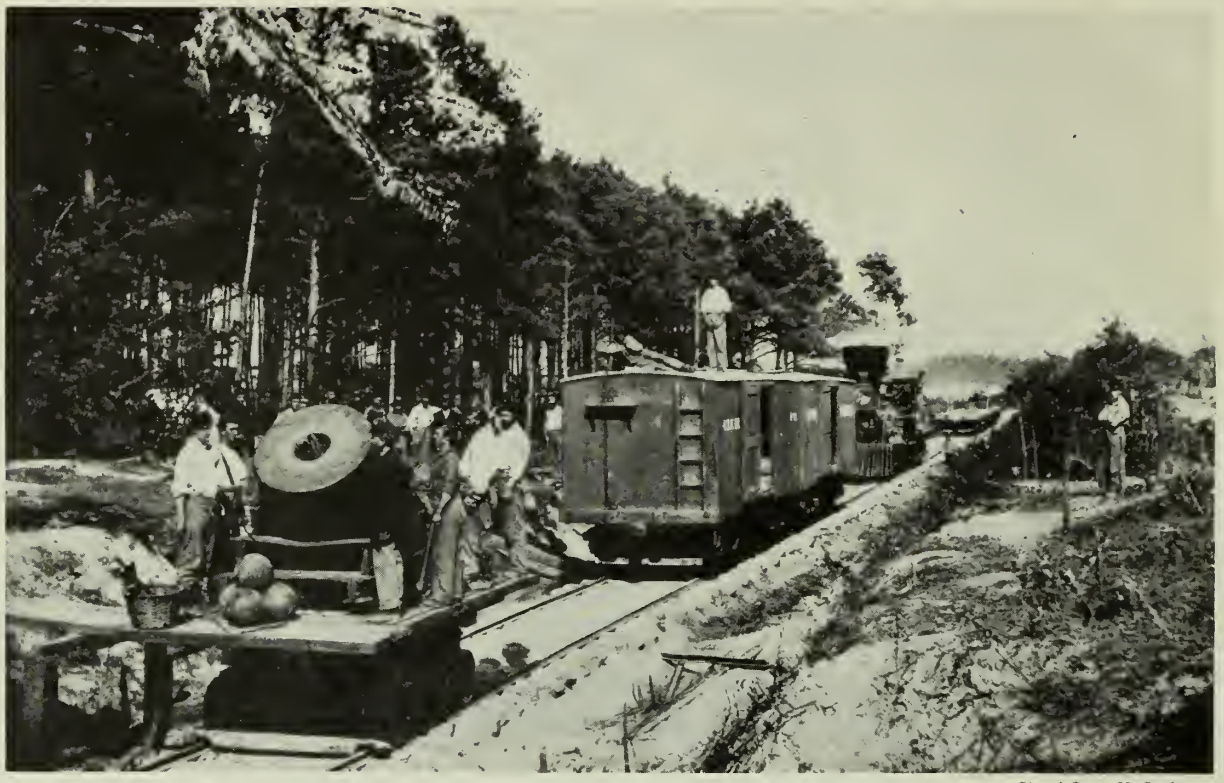
CONTENTS

Coehorn Mortars, Wartime Sketch	*Cover*
Foreword	5
Tour of National Battlefield Parks from Manassas to Appomattox	7
The War as a Whole	8
A Synopsis of Events in the Eastern Theater of the War Between the States	9
Manassas National Battlefield Park Project	11
The First Battle of Manassas [Bull Run]	11
The Campaign of Second Manassas	13
Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park	15
The Battle of Fredericksburg	15
The Chancellorsville Campaign	18
The Battle of the Wilderness	19
The Battle of Spotsylvania Court House	20
Spotsylvania to Cold Harbor	21
Richmond National Battlefield Park Project	23
The Peninsula Campaign	23
The Battle of Cold Harbor	24
The Army of the James	25
Petersburg National Military Park	27
The Petersburg Campaign	27
The Battle of the Crater	28
The Battle of Fort Stedman	29
Appomattox National Battlefield Site Project	30
Petersburg to Appomattox	30



PETERSBURG—THE U. S. MORTAR "DICTATOR" ON A RAILROAD CAR. WARTIME PHOTOGRAPH

Signal Corps U. S. Army

"THE DICTATOR" IN POSITION TODAY—REPLICA BY THE CCC

FOREWORD

The National Park Service of the United States Department of the Interior administers, or is in the process of acquiring, five Civil War battlefield areas in Virginia, embracing the battlegrounds around Manassas, Fredericksburg, Richmond, Petersburg, and Appomattox Court House. The effort has been to preserve and interpret the fields so that we may know how America was wrought. The National Park Service is striving to prevent destruction of concrete associations with the past throughout our country, and the battlefields are but one phase of its historical program.

Preservation is first a matter of acquisition to avert destruction. The second step is to prevent deterioration or to repair past ravages by active treatment, as, for example, the seeding and sodding of trench remains by the Civilian Conservation Corps, working under the technical supervision of the National Park Service.

After preservation comes interpretation. Interpretation through physical development starts with the building of roads and trails to make the remains and points of interest accessible.

The explanation of trenches and historic sites follows their being made accessible. Interpretation here works through the medium of narrative and directional markers, trailside exhibits, outdoor maps, orientation discs, and other outdoor interpretative facilities designed to aid the visitor in reading history for himself through the terrain.

Indoor exhibits are housed in central museums and in visitors' contact stations on the fields. Informed men, National Park Service and Civilian Conservation Corps personnel, at such points round out the interpretative program by rendering personal service.

Important also are the restoration of historic roads and the reconstruction of houses and small portions of trench lines or other remains, when such reconstruction serves the educational purpose. Landscaping for both historical and esthetic purposes also has a part in the program. In all these activities, the Civilian Conservation Corps, popularly known as the CCC, has contributed to the work in a lasting way. Much has been accomplished and much still is left to do.

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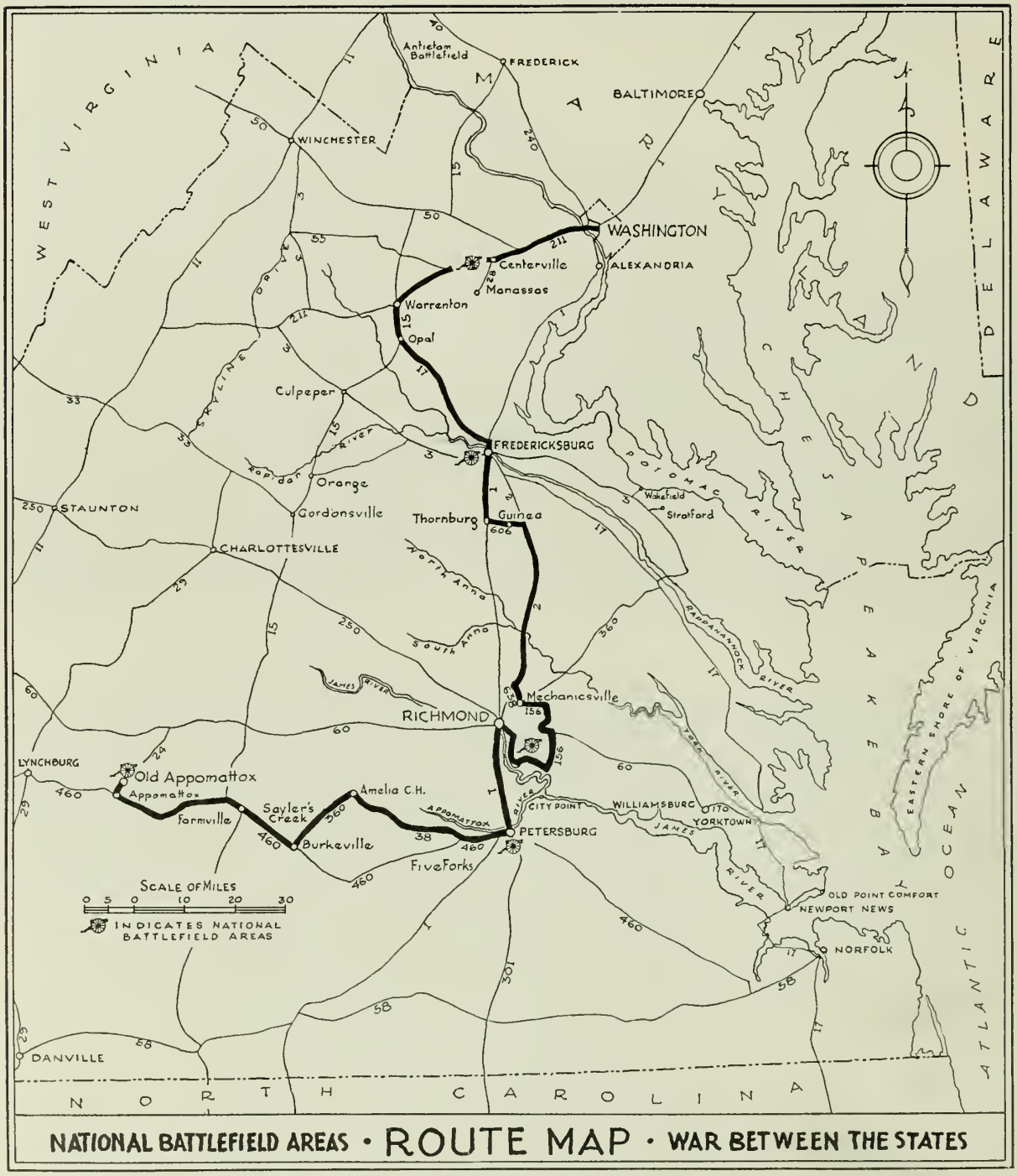
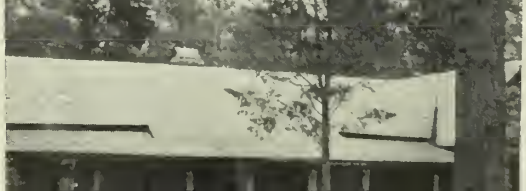


NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD AREAS • ROUTE MAP • WAR BETWEEN THE STATES

AL AND COORDINATING HEADQUARTERS
ND MUSEUM AT FREDERICKSBURG

FORT HARRISON (RICHMOND PARK
MUSEUM AND HEADQUARTERS)



VISITORS' CONTACT POINT, CRATER BATTLEFIELD,
PETERSBURG NATIONAL MILITARY PARK *Lum photo*

Tour of National Battlefield Parks
From Manassas to Appomattox

*

THE MAP opposite and the area maps that follow should be consulted in reading this booklet. (Mileages are approximate.)

Starting from Washington, a tour can be made which will cover the areas in chronological order, though Second Manassas and the Peninsula Campaign are exceptions because of the area treatment.

From Washington, by way of United States Highway No. 211, the route of the Federals of 1861 may be followed generally, 24 miles to Centerville. The Manassas or Bull Run Battlefield is all around and narrative markers tell the stories of the two battles.

Proceeding from the Manassas Park, still on 211, drive to Warrenton, 46 miles from Washington. Here the Federal army, in November of 1862, prepared to move on Fredericksburg. At Warrenton, turn left onto United States Highway No. 15 to Opal and from there on State Highway No. 17 to Falmouth, 38 miles from Warrenton, to follow the approximate route of the Federals.

From the Falmouth Bridge go through Fredericksburg by way of Princess Anne Street and Lafayette Boulevard (i. e., United States Highway No. 1) to the headquarters and museum of the Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park. Here are displays and wartime relics; here, too, the visitor is directed to the various contact stations of the park, including the fields of Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, the Wilderness, and Spotsylvania Court House. A round trip of these fields covers about 45 miles. In this area, as at Richmond and Petersburg, are to be found comfort stations and picnic areas on the fields.

Having seen the battlegrounds about Fredericksburg and leaving the town, go by way of United States Highway No. 1, 13 miles, to Thornburg. Here turn left onto State Road No. 606 and travel 6 miles to the Jackson Shrine, where Stonewall Jackson died, May 10, 1863, after his mortal wounding at Chancellorsville. This original house is a part of the Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park. Continue on 606 3 miles to State Highway No. 2 and turn right, proceeding for 37 miles to State Road No. 638 (8 miles beyond Hanover Court House), and go 4 miles to Mechanicsville. You now enter Route No. 156, the Battlefield Route, laid out by the Commonwealth of Virginia, tracing the Seven Days fighting of 1862 Peninsula Campaign and passing two contact points—Cold Harbor and Fort Harrison—of the Richmond National Battlefield Park Project.

A view of the Richmond terrain, by way of Route No. 156, entails about 50 miles of driving, ending in the city of Richmond.

From Fredericksburg to the Mechanicsville neighborhood (Cold Harbor), you follow roughly the Federal route after Spotsylvania in May and June of 1864; in the Richmond area, you see the fields of both 1862 and 1864; from Richmond to Petersburg, on United States Highway No. 1, 22 miles, you follow the Confederates after Cold Harbor, hurrying to the defense of Petersburg.

The Petersburg National Military Park has visitors' contact stations at Battery 5 and the Crater. At either point the visitor is given information about parts of this park. The Petersburg Park Tour, starting at Battery 5, is about 25 miles. (It should be explained that all National Park Service visitors' contact stations are small museums, the Crater being the main museum of the Petersburg area.)

From Petersburg, proceed to Amelia Court House on United States Highway No. 460 and Virginia Highway No. 38; from Amelia to Appomattox Court House take United States Highways Nos. 360 and 460. Note that the Surrender Ground, being developed by the National Park Service, is just north of the new courthouse. This route from Petersburg to Appomattox, about 100 miles, passing the battlefields of Sayler's Creek and Farmville, is the ground covered by Lee's retreat and Grant's pursuit. The Surrender Ground, the end of the tour, saw the virtual end of the Confederacy, April 9, 1865.

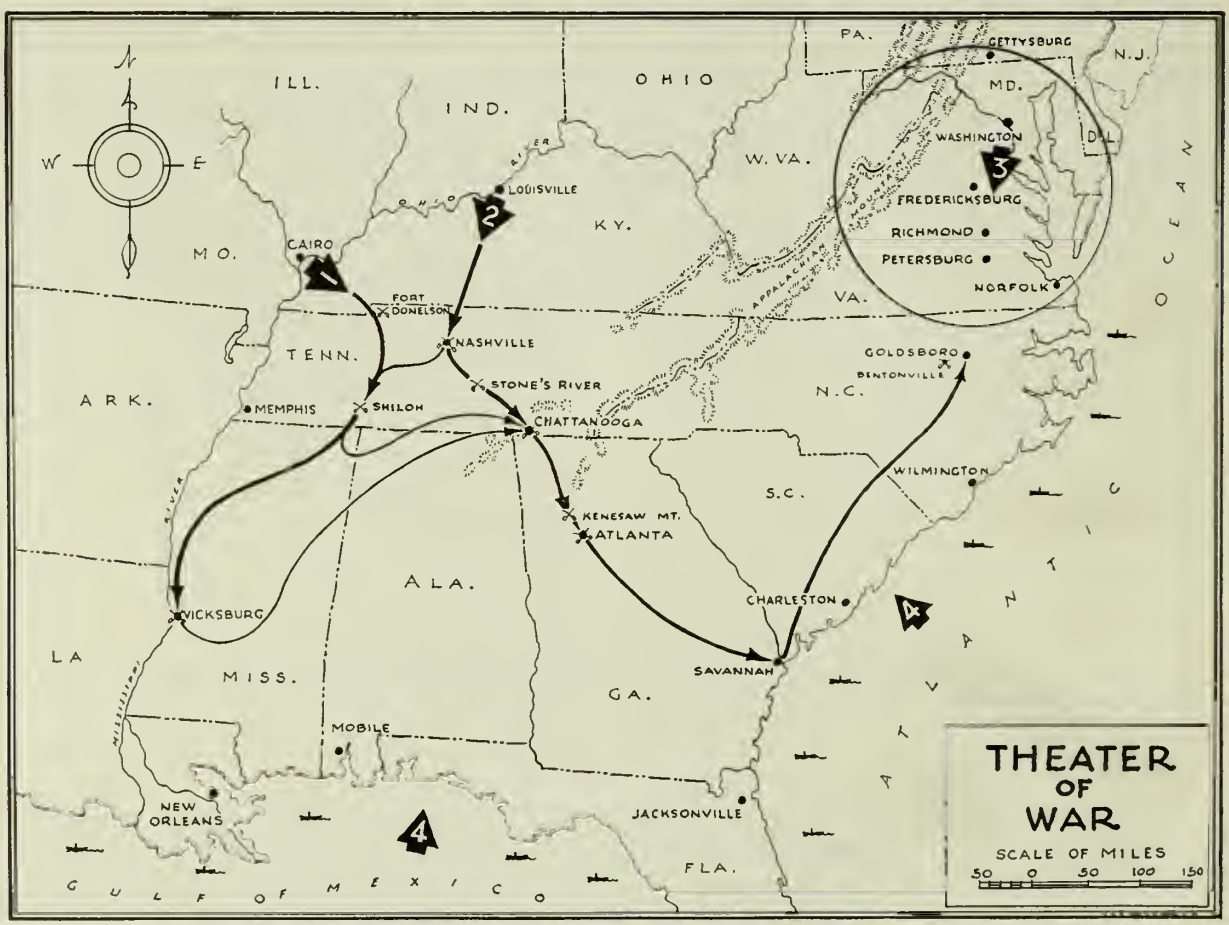
These areas are administered by the National Park Service of the United States Department of the Interior under the immediate supervision of the coordinating superintendent, Branch Spalding.

The War as a Whole

*

Military and naval operations against the Southern Confederacy may be grouped in four general movements. These resolved themselves into the following: (1) The conquest of the Mississippi River, which isolated a considerable area from the main body of the Confederacy, (2) the thrust across the Nashville Basin and through the mountain corridor of East Tennessee into Georgia, which cut the remaining portion of the Confederacy in two, (3) the 4-year drive on Richmond, involving seven offensive campaigns and imposing losses which the limited man-power of the Confederacy could ill afford, (4) the attack from the sea, which gradually stifled the economic life of the Confederacy in the ever-tightening grip of a naval blockade.

Operating with indifferent success against Richmond during 1861–63, the Federal Army of the Potomac served as a strategic pivot for the main armies in the West. Those forces executed a grand half-left wheel from the Ohio River toward the Appalachian Mountains. After completing its con-



Signal Corps U. S. Army

"QUAKER" (DUMMY-LOG) GUNS—CENTERVILLE CONFEDERATE DEFENSES AFTER FIRST MANASSAS.
WARTIME PHOTOGRAPH

quest of the Mississippi at Vicksburg, which capitulated to Grant on July 4, 1863, the outer flank converged on the movement into East Tennessee. Here the Federals under Grant's command overwhelmed Bragg at the Battle of Chattanooga, November 23–25, and opened the way into Georgia.

The Federal half-left wheel in the West was not an irresistible sweep. In the East the Confederates shattered the pivot in five successive campaigns, beginning with First Manassas, July 21, 1861. In August 1862, after driving McClellan from the environs of Richmond and crushing Pope at the Battle of Second Manassas, Lee invaded Maryland. Bragg, Confederate commander-in-chief in the West, seized the initiative and pushed over the Cumberland plateau to the Ohio River. Facing hopeless odds and trusting to luck for supplies, these daring counterthrusts had small hope of success. Lee was checked at Antietam Creek, September 17, 1862; Bragg turned back after a drawn battle near Perryville, Kentucky, October 8, 1862. Victorious at Fredericksburg, December 13, 1862, and again at Chancellorsville, May 1–6, 1863, Lee sought to induce foreign intervention and loosen Grant's grip on Vicksburg by carrying the war into Northern territory. These hopes were ruined at Gettysburg, July 3, 1863. Vicksburg fell the day following. Lee reverted to the defensive in Virginia.

Grant now assumed supreme command in the field as lieutenant general of the Federal armies. Directing operations in Virginia, he crossed the Rapidan, May 4, 1864. Sherman resumed the Federal left wheel in the West, sweeping down from Chattanooga toward Atlanta. While Grant pounded Lee on the anvil of Richmond and Petersburg, Sherman cut a wide path of devastation from Atlanta to the sea, then turned northward into the Carolinas. In his last extremity Lee attempted to join Joseph E. Johnston, who commanded the Confederate forces opposing Sherman. Grant intercepted Lee at Appomattox. With Lee's surrender on April 9 and Johnston's capitulation, April 26, the Confederacy collapsed.

A Synopsis of Events in the Eastern Theater of the War Between the States

*

THE TERM "War in the East" is here meant to include the operations of the armies in Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania. Many of the important operations occurred in the area between Washington and Richmond, the capital of the Confederacy. A circle drawn on the map with Fredericksburg, Va., as center and the distance from Washington to Petersburg as a radius would take in all the important battlegrounds. A line along the diameter of the circle from Richmond to Washington represents the direct line of attack and defense, with the western periphery of the circle, the Shenandoah Valley region, existing as Lee's open road to the North, and the eastern periphery, the Chesapeake Bay, as the easiest approach to Richmond. Confederate forces could quickly protect the few passes into the Valley, and the Federal navy commanded the sea.

There were seven distinct Federal campaigns in the Eastern Theater: those of McDowell (1861); McClellan, Pope, and Burnside (1862); Hooker (1863); Meade (1863); and Grant (1864–65). Two major invasions of the North, ending at Antietam in 1862 and Gettysburg in 1863 were made by the Confederates.

The first great battle in the East took place near Manassas, on the banks of Bull Run. Here, July 21, 1861, the southern generals, Joseph E. Johnston and Beauregard, defeated McDowell and stopped the first "On to Richmond." The next campaign, under General McClellan, in 1862, was by water to Fortress Monroe at Old Point Comfort and thence overland toward Richmond, by way of the Peninsula, between the James and York Rivers. Meanwhile, Jackson scattered the Federal forces in the Shenandoah Valley, and McDowell, supposed to make a junction with McClellan, was recalled to protect Washington.

At Fair Oaks, May 31, 1862, within sight of Richmond, the main Confederate army stopped McClellan's advance; General Johnston was wounded and replaced by Robert E. Lee as army commander. Jackson, having accomplished his purpose in the Valley, joined Lee near Richmond. In the Seven Days Battles, June 25–July 1, 1862, McClellan fell back to a new base on the James and from there returned by water to Washington. The next commander, Pope, attempted another direct move to the South, which Lee crushed at Second Manassas (August 29–30) holding Pope off with one part of his army while the other attacked in flank.

Lee now moved northward. McClellan, again in the field, met him at Sharpsburg, Md., on Antietam Creek, September 16–17, 1862, in a fierce engagement, after which the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia was compelled to retire. McClellan followed slowly, so slowly that the Government replaced him on November 9.

Burnside, the new commander, planned to cross the Rappahannock at Fredericksburg before Lee reached there with all his forces, but was unable to accomplish this. Crossing at last and attacking a strong Confederate line on December 13, he was repulsed.

Toward the last of April 1863, Major General Joseph Hooker, having assumed command, moved the bulk of the army up the north bank of the Rappahannock. At Chancellorsville Lee defeated Hooker, but his famous lieutenant, Jackson, was mortally wounded on the evening of May 2, 1863. Lee then invaded the North again.

At Gettysburg, Pa., General George G. Meade, Hooker's successor, defeated the Army of Northern Virgina, July 1–3, 1863, and ended Lee's last grand scale offensive. After the Confederate retreat, maneuvers along the Rapidan, considered as a Federal offensive campaign, about 25 miles west of Fredericksburg, ended with the armies going into winter quarters, the Federals around Culpeper Court House and the Confederates in the vicinity of Orange Court House.

Grant, who took supreme command in the spring, planned concerted action for all the Federal forces. In Virginia these were Meade's Army of the Potomac, Butler's Army of the James, moving toward Richmond from the southeast, and various forces in the Shenandoah Valley.

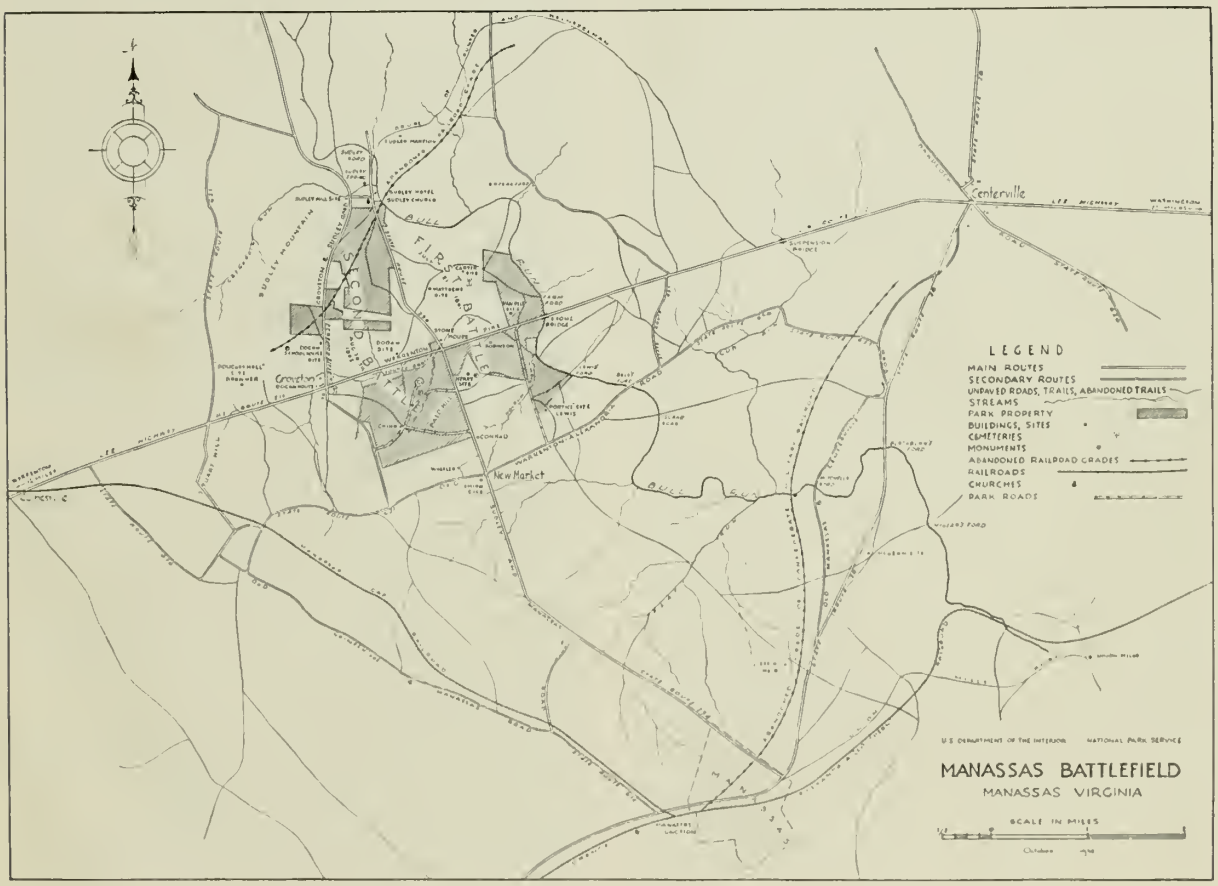
Grant, seeking to destroy Lee in the field and capture Richmond, crossed the Rapidan and met Lee's army in the Wilderness, May 5–6, 1864, in a drawn battle, following which the Federal Army was able to make another move to the southeast toward Spotsylvania Court House. Between May 8 and 21 there occurred here a grim series of attacks and counter-attacks, centering around the Bloody Angle salient. Grant finally resumed his movement toward Richmond.

Out-maneuvered at the North Anna River, Grant made at Cold Harbor an attack on the Confederate line which ended in the sharpest repulse he had met in the campaign, but which was followed by a successful and brilliant shift to the south bank of the James in an attempt to cut Lee's communications by attack from the south at Petersburg. General Beauregard with a small force successfully defended the town for 4 days, June 15–18, while Lee's army came up. Then both sides settled into the relative positions they held until the final move to Appomattox. Grant, with the right of his line north of the James, steadily extended his left southwest of Petersburg and by a series of major operations involving bitter fighting, cut the railroads and highways upon which Lee depended for supplies.

Lee, repeating his strategy of 1862, sent Early in mid-June to clear the Shenandoah Valley and threaten Washington and Baltimore, an audacious effort which failed so far as relieving Petersburg was concerned and ended with Sheridan's successful Valley campaign in the early fall. On July 30, 1864, the Federals made one more attempt at direct assault on the line at Petersburg by exploding a mine under the Confederate works. This was the Battle of the Crater, another Federal defeat.

March 25, 1865, the Confederates, trying to break the ring of iron around Petersburg, temporarily captured Federal Fort Stedman. At Five Forks, April 1, 1865, the Confederate forces were shattered in the last of Grant's operations to extend his left.

The thinly held Confederate line had finally been stretched to breaking. Lee evacuated his Richmond and Petersburg fortifications and retreated westward. At Appomattox Court House, April 9, 1865, the Army of Northern Virginia surrendered.



Manassas National Battlefield Park Project

The First Battle of Manassas

[BULL RUN]

THE SURRENDER of Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor, April 13, 1861, precipitated the armed conflict so long threatened between North and South. On the 15th, Lincoln called for 75,000 volunteers for 3 months' service. Two days later, Virginia seceded, bringing the northern boundary of the Confederacy to the Potomac.

As summer advanced, the northern press clamored for action. The term of enlistment of the volunteers drilling in the defenses of Washington would soon expire. Unless they were speedily placed in motion, all hope of ending the war before winter would pass. Urged on by the press, Scott, general-in-chief of the Federal armies, and McDowell, commander of the troops in Washington, at length gave reluctant consent to an offensive in Virginia.

The main Confederate army, under Beauregard, was concentrated in the vicinity of Centerville, 25 miles from the Federal capital, covering Manassas Station at the junction of the Manassas Gap and the Orange and Alexandria railroads. In the Shenandoah Valley to the west, a smaller Confederate force, commanded by Joseph E. Johnston, confronted a superior Union army under Patterson.

McDowell proposed to move against the main Confederate force. Patterson was to hold Johnston in the Valley, thus preventing reinforcement of Beauregard at Centerville.

Assured that Patterson would carry out the part assigned him, McDowell, on July 16, began the movement. Beauregard fell back across Bull Run and disposed his brigades to meet the attack.

McDowell planned to strike the Confederate left by a flank movement to the north along Bull Run to Sudley Ford, approximately 7 miles northwest of Centerville. Crossing there, his troops would move south along the Sudley Spring Road and strike the Confederate left flank. Should this initial movement prove successful, the Federal demonstrating force in the Confederate front would cross at the Stone Bridge, where the Warrenton Turnpike spans Bull Run, and unite with the flanking column.

Early on the morning of July 21, Tyler's Division moved west on the Turnpike against the Confederate left at the Stone Bridge. Hunter's and Heintzelman's Divisions moved above Tyler to Sudley Ford, crossed Bull Run, turned south, and emerged from the woods about 1 mile north of the junction of the Sudley Spring Road and the Warrenton Turnpike.

Brigadier General Evans, holding the left of the Confederate line at the Stone Bridge, became aware of the movement and changed front, taking position north of the Warrenton Turnpike and Young's Branch, directly across the path of the Federal flanking column. Though supported in his stand by the brigades of Bee and Bartow, he was forced back across the Warrenton Turnpike.

Jackson, in rear of the Confederate left, took position at the edge of the woods on the Henry House Hill. Here he formed a rallying point for the retreating Confederates. Brigades from the Confederate right were brought to the Henry House Hill to support that flank.

Against Jackson's position, McDowell threw units of Porter's, Franklin's, Willcox's, and Sherman's brigades in successive charges. Ricketts' and Griffin's batteries, moving with the infantry, secured position near the summit of the Hill. McDowell's well-planned offensive, undertaken with raw, undisciplined troops, now promised success for the Union army.

But Patterson had failed to contain Johnston in the Shenandoah Valley. Before McDowell had crossed Bull Run, three brigades from the Valley had been brought to the field. The last of Johnston's reinforcements arrived about 3:30 p. m. and struck the Federal right, as Jackson's troops were repulsing the series of stalwart attacks on the summit of Henry House Hill.

Pressed by this unexpected attack, the Federal right flank gave way, falling back across Bull Run. Retreat turned to rout as the disorganized Federals retired on the defenses of Washington.

Federal strength, 35,732; losses, 2,708.

Confederate strength, 31,810; losses, 1,982.

The Campaign of Second Manassas

*

Disheartened by McClellan's failure to meet the public demand for a decisive victory during the early summer of 1862, Lincoln took steps in June to intensify the Federal offensive against Richmond. Halleck was appointed general-in-chief and assigned the task of coordinating Federal strategy. Units covering Washington were consolidated under Pope in a single command, designated the Army of Virginia. It was proposed that Pope advance along the Orange and Alexandria Railway (now Southern) toward its junction with the Virginia Central (Chesapeake & Ohio) at Gordonsville, thereby threatening Lee's line of rail communications between Richmond and the Valley of Virginia. McClellan, after refitting the Army of the Potomac at Harrison's Landing, on the James, would resume operations against Richmond.

McClellan's delay in developing the movement on Richmond enabled Lee to assemble a detached force under Jackson at Gordonsville. Pope, after a temporary check at Cedar Mountain, on August 9, advanced to the Rapidan River and took a position 15 miles north of Gordonsville. Halleck, meantime, had decided to shift the direction of his main attack. On August 3 he ordered McClellan to repair by sea to the vicinity of Washington and send the greater part of his troops to Pope. Heavily reinforced, the Army of Virginia would then proceed overland to Richmond.

As soon as Lee was aware that McClellan was evacuating the Peninsula, he joined Jackson and prepared to attack Pope before reinforcements from McClellan could reach the Rapidan. A threat to the Federal left persuaded Pope to fall back behind the Rappahannock. Cavalry reconnaissance disclosed that the III and V Corps, Army of the Potomac, were two marches in rear of Pope and that the rest of McClellan's force was within 5 days' march of the Rappahannock. In all, 130,000 Federals were in the field against Lee's Army of Northern Virginia, numbering 55,000.

In these difficult straits Lee undertook the dangerous expedient of dividing his force to strike at the enemy's rail communications. Jackson, with a flying column of three divisions, moved through the Blue Ridge foothills around Pope's right and, slipping unobserved on August 26 through Thoroughfare Gap, descended upon the Federal supply base at Manassas Junction. The next day, August 27, after burning Pope's stores, Jackson withdrew northward across the Warrenton Pike and concealed his force in the woods between Groveton and the west bank of Bull Run.

Securely intrenched behind the embankment of an unfinished railroad, he looked southeast over the old battlefield of Bull Run. Lee, following Jackson from the Rappahannock with Longstreet's wing of five divisions, reached Thoroughfare Gap at nightfall, August 28.

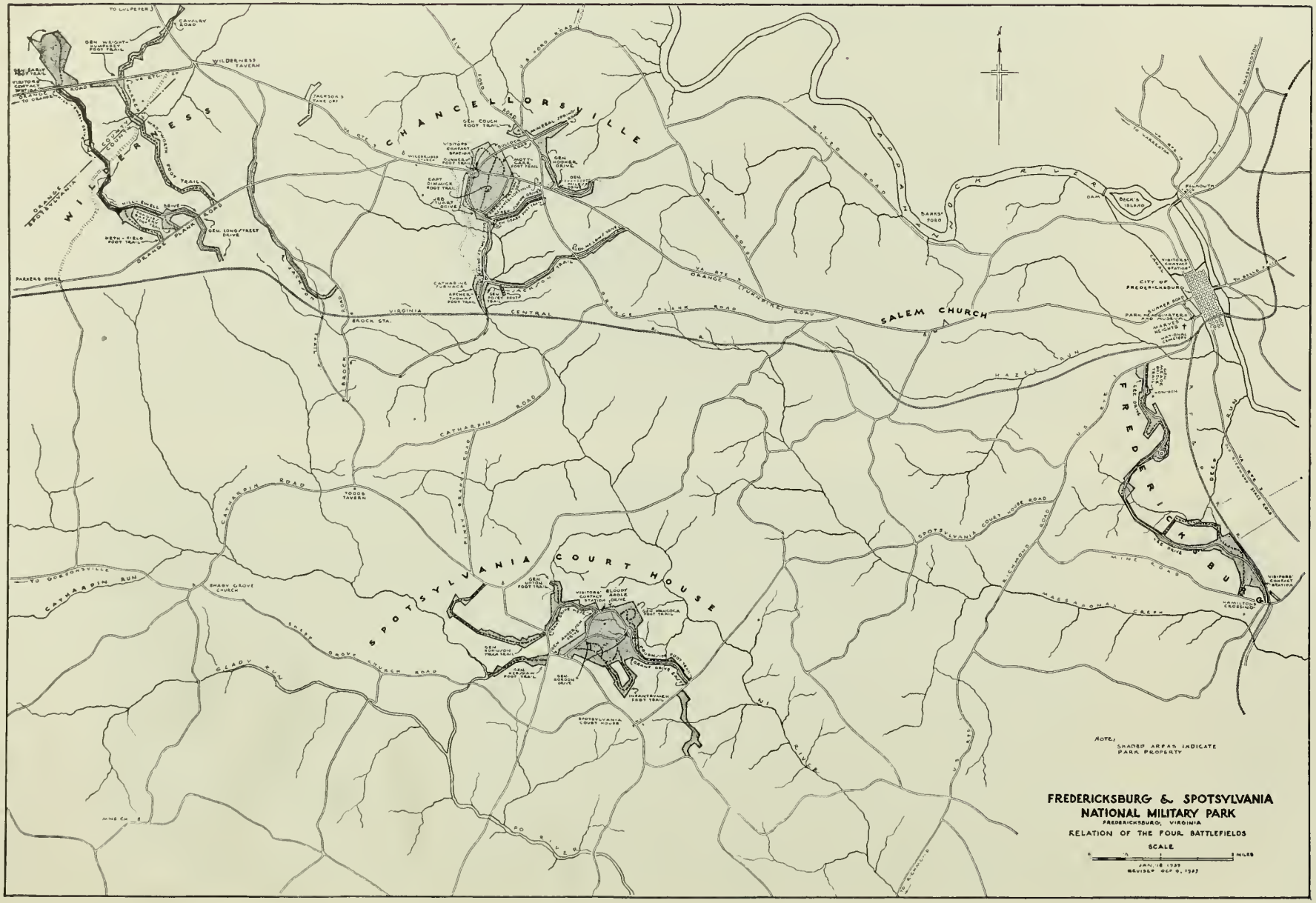
Bewildered by news of the Confederate raid on his communications, Pope began concentrating toward Manassas Junction. On the 29th he threw his whole force, which now included the III and V Corps, Army of the Potomac, against Jackson. While the battle raged north of Groveton, Longstreet turned into the Warrenton Pike at Gainesville and, marching unopposed toward Groveton, extended the Confederate line southward across the pike.

Early on the 30th Pope renewed the battle with a drive against Jackson's line. As the attacking column staggered forward under the raking fire of Confederate batteries, Jackson delivered a furious counterstroke. At this juncture Longstreet wheeled his line northeast, sweeping over Bald Hill and drove on toward the pike. Only the resolute stand of Federal troops on the Henry House Plateau, where Jackson won his historic sobriquet of "Stonewall" the year before, enabled Pope to fall back eastward over Bull Run to Centerville.

The Federal commander, on September 2, foiled a Confederate attempt to cut across his line of retreat in the desperately contested action at Ox Hill (Chantilly) and retired within the defenses of Washington. Lee prepared to invade Maryland.

Federal strength, approximately 100,000; losses, 14,462.

Confederate strength, approximately 55,000; losses, 9,112.


WILDERNESS
CHANCELLORSVILLE
SALEM CHURCH
SPOTSYLVANIA COURT HOUSE
FREDERICKSBURG
CITY OF FREDERICKSBURG
WILDERNESS TAVERN
TODDS TAVERN
SHADY GROVE CHURCH
BROCK STA.
PARKERS STORE
VIRGINIA CENTRAL RAILROAD
ORANGE PLANK ROAD
ORANGE TURNPIKE
PLANK ROAD
CATHARPIN ROAD
SPOTSYLVANIA COURT HOUSE ROAD
RICHMOND
MINE ROAD
MASSAPONAX CREEK
HAZEL RUN
DEEP RUN
CATHARPIN RUN
GLADY RUN
PO RIVER
MINE CR.
RAPPAHANNOCK RIVER
BARNES FORD
BECK'S ISLAND
PALMOUTH
HAMILTON'S CROSSING
TO WASHINGTON
TO RICHMOND
TO LOUISA
TO ORANGE
TO LOCUST GROVE
TO GORDONSVILLE
TO CHANCELLORSVILLE
TO SPOTSYLVANIA
TO FREDERICKSBURG
GEN. WRIGHT-SUMNER FOOT TRAIL
CAVALRY FIELD
GEN. LONGSTREET DRIVE
HEATH-RIELY FOOT TRAIL
GEN. COUCH FOOT TRAIL
GEN. HOOKER DRIVE
GEN. HANCOCK DRIVE
GEN. SEDGWICK DRIVE
GEN. SLOCUM FOOT TRAIL
GEN. WARREN FOOT TRAIL
GEN. GRIFFIN FOOT TRAIL
GEN. MEADE DRIVE
GEN. BURNSIDE DRIVE
GEN. SICKLES DRIVE
GEN. HOWARD DRIVE
GEN. BARLOW DRIVE
GEN. GIBBON DRIVE
GEN. HUMPHREY DRIVE
GEN. ANDREW'S DRIVE
GEN. CROCKER DRIVE
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GEN. BURNSIDE DRIVE

Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park[1]

The Battle of Fredericksburg

After the Battle of Antietam (Sharpsburg, Md.), September 17, 1862, Lee retired into Virginia via the Shenandoah Valley. McClellan's follow-up move, east of the Blue Ridge Mountains, caused the Confederate leader to leave Jackson's Corps in the vicinity of Winchester and bring Longstreet over the mountains to Culpeper Court House.

November 9, Burnside relieved McClellan, whom the Federal authorities considered dilatory, as commander of the Army of the Potomac. That army was now around Warrenton, Va., 40 miles northwest of Fredericksburg, to which point Burnside planned a rapid move. Thence he would push on to Richmond before Lee could concentrate against him.

Bridges over the Rappahannock from Stafford County to Fredericksburg had been destroyed; pontoons, therefore, were vital to Burnside's purpose. His van reached Stafford Heights, facing Spotsylvania Heights across the river valley, November 17; his pontoons, November 25. By then Longstreet had arrived at Fredericksburg. Jackson joined in force before December 1.

While Burnside established his pontoon bridges at and below Fredericksburg, December 11, and crossed, December 12, Lee contracted his line.

On the morning of December 13, Jackson, ordered up from down river, massed his divisions along Spotsylvania Heights from Hamilton's Railroad Crossing, on the right, northwest to the Lansdowne Valley, a third of the 7-mile Confederate line. From there to the river dam, a mile and a half northwest of the town, Longstreet's divisions, in a more extended formation, held the Heights with the river in front and touching Longstreet's left flank. Along the base of Marye's Heights, west of the town, regiments of McLaws' and Ransom's Divisions of Longstreet's Corps were posted in the Sunken Road, protected by a stone wall.

A preliminary obstruction to the Federals was a canal ditch near the edge of town, about 500 yards east of the Sunken Road. The extreme Confederate left was well protected by a deep canal.

In the town, Sumner's Right Grand Division, and south of the town, Franklin's Left Grand Division, faced westward. Hooker's Center Grand Division on Stafford Heights was to reinforce both wings. As the fog lifted, Franklin attacked the brigades of A. P. Hill's Division, the front line units of Jackson's Corps, near Hamilton's; and Sumner moved out the cross streets of Fredericksburg toward the Sunken Road.

On Franklin's front, the three divisions of Reynolds' Corps, Meade in the center, supported by Gibbon on the right and Doubleday on the left, pushed through severe artillery fire toward the Confederate line. Stuart's Cavalry, with the mobile horse artillery under Pelham, detaining Meade, nullified Doubleday, thus adequately guarding Jackson's extreme right. Gibbon was stopped at the railroad, Jackson's first line of defense, but Meade found and penetrated a 600-yard gap in Hill's line, turning Archer and smashing Gregg, two of Hill's brigades. No reinforcements followed Meade into the gap. Fighting bitterly, he was driven back by the Confederate reserves under Early and Taliaferro.

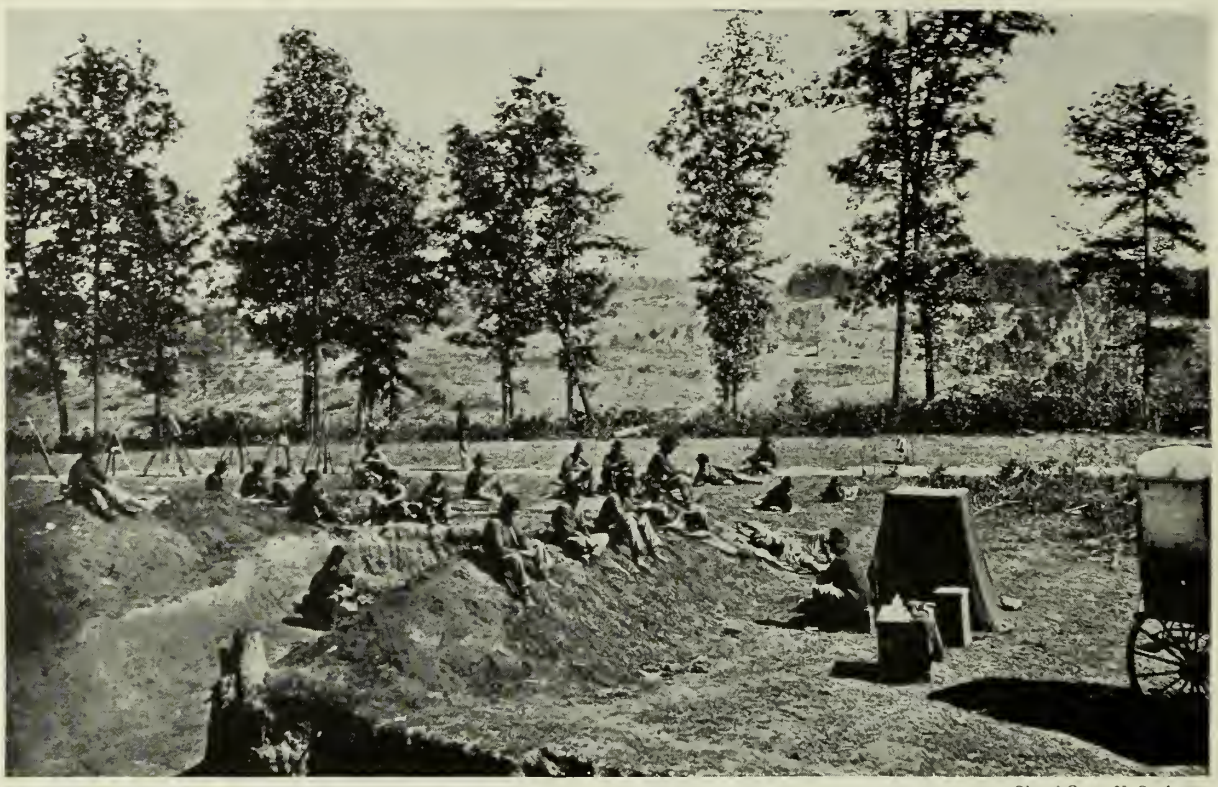
Meanwhile, Burnside dissipated Sumner's Right Grand Division, reinforced by elements of Hooker's Center Grand Division, in a series of attacks against the Sunken Road, involving 19 brigades. The Federal waves of attack were stopped and hurled back, despite the steady courage of the attackers, by terrific fire from Confederate infantry in the Sunken Road and artillery on the Heights behind. Alexander's Confederate Artillery Battalion relieved New Orleans' Washington Artillery when the ammunition of the Louisianians ran out. Not a chicken, said Alexander, could cross that plain alive.

Dusk fell on a defeated Union army. Burnside's envisaged rout of the Confederate flanks, causing an evacuation of the center, had not occurred. During the night of December 15–16, Burnside recrossed the river and took up his pontoons. Both sides now went into winter quarters.

Federal strength, 142,551; losses, 12,653.

Confederate strength, 91,760; losses, 5,309.

[1] The headquarters and museum building is located at the southwestern edge of Fredericksburg on Lafayette Boulevard (U S 1).



CIVIL WAR DARK ROOM IN THE FIELD

Signal Corps U. S. Army

A NEW YORK FERRY THAT WAS DRAFTED INTO THE FEDERAL NAVY. PAMUNKEY RIVER, 1864

Signal Corps U. S. Army

RUINS OF HENRY HOUSE. MANASSAS BATTLEFIELD. WARTIME PHOTOGRAPH

Signal Corps U. S. Army

FEDERAL SUPPLY BASE ON THE PAMUNKEY AS SEEN THROUGH THE WET PLATE OF THE 60'S

Signal Corps U. S. Army

The Chancellorsville Campaign

*

In April 1863, Hooker, who had supplanted Burnside in command of the Army of the Potomac, proposed to take the initiative against the Confederate army facing him across the Rappahannock. Burnside's frontal assault on the heights behind Fredericksburg had brought disaster to his army. Hooker planned to nullify the strong Confederate position by a turning movement which would place the greater part of his force in rear of Lee's army. To fix Lee's attention at Fredericksburg, a holding force would be thrown across the river to demonstrate in force against the Confederate right flank. Successful completion of the movement would place Lee between strong Federal forces and compel him to fight on two fronts or retreat on Richmond.

In pursuance of this plan, the turning column comprising the V, XI, and XII Corps, moved up the north bank of the river April 27 and, crossing the Rappahannock and the Rapidan, concentrated at Chancellorsville, 10 miles in rear of Lee's left, on April 30. Two divisions of the II Corps, the III and later the I Corps were brought up by way of United States Ford. In the meantime, the holding force under Sedgwick had crossed the river at two points below the town.

Hooker's turning movement had been so skilfully executed that it was not until late on the 29th that Lee was apprised of the concentration in his rear. Deciding to dispose of this threat, Lee dispatched McLaw's Division and Jackson's Corps, less Early's Division, to that front to reinforce Anderson in retreat before the Federal advance. Early, with 10,000 men, was left at Fredericksburg to contain the Federal demonstrating force.

At 11 a. m., May 1, Hooker resumed his movement eastward toward Fredericksburg. Meeting opposition, he fell back to Chancellorsville and intrenched. Jackson followed Hooker to within approximately a mile of the Federal position.

During a conference between Lee and Jackson on the night of May 1, a reconnaissance report revealed the weakness of Hooker's right resting on the Orange Turnpike about 3 miles west of Chancellorsville. It was decided to throw Jackson with 32,000 men across the Federal front and strike this exposed flank from the west. Lee was to remain on Hooker's front and left with 13,000 men.

Shortly after 7 a. m., May 2, Jackson's flanking column got under way. A Federal attack engaged the rear guard about noon but failed to halt the movement.

Jackson reached the Turnpike late in the afternoon, deployed in three lines and about 6 p. m. surprised and shattered Howard's XI Corps, forcing it back on Chancellorsville in disorder. The Confederates steadily pressed this retreating force to within 1 mile of Chancellorsville.

Here Stonewall Jackson halted temporarily his pursuit and, returning from a reconnaissance with his staff, was mortally wounded by the fire of his own men, who mistook the party for enemy cavalry.

At daylight the following morning, Stuart, called to command Jackson's corps, renewed the attack, extending his right to join with Lee's left. After 6 hours of severe fighting, the Federals were forced back to an intrenched position north of Chancellorsville, covering United States Ford.

At this juncture, Lee received word that Sedgwick had driven Early from the heights at Fredericksburg and was moving west on the Plank Road toward Chancellorsville. Detached to meet this new threat, McLaws succeeded in checking the Federal advance at Salem Church. On May 4 Anderson joined McLaws, forming south of Sedgwick's position while Early returned to the heights and cut off Sedgwick from Fredericksburg. Sedgwick fought off a Confederate attack and under cover of darkness retreated across the Rappahannock.

With Sedgwick disposed of, Lee again concentrated his forces at Chancellorsville but his advance against Hooker's new position on May 6 disclosed that the Federals had retired across the Rappahannock at United States Ford the previous night.

Lee now took the offensive and began his second invasion of the North, culminating in his defeat at Gettysburg, July 1–3, 1863.

Federal strength, 133,868; losses, 17,278.

Confederate strength, 60,892; losses, 12,821.

The Battle of the Wilderness

*

AFTER his repulse at Gettysburg, July 3, 1863, Lee returned to Virginia. Meade, who had superseded Hooker as major general commanding the Army of the Potomac, followed cautiously. In November, after the indecisive campaigns of Bristoe Station and Mine Run, Lee took up a strong defensive position along the Rapidan.

With general headquarters at Orange Court House, 37 miles west of Fredericksburg, the Confederate left rested in the Blue Ridge foothills. The right was masked by the Wilderness, the same gloomy woodland in which Hooker came to disaster during his operations at Chancellorsville, May 1–6, 1863. Meade quartered his army for the winter in a vast city of canvas around Culpeper.

Assigned with the rank of lieutenant general to supreme command of the Federal forces, Grant established his headquarters at Culpeper and hastened preparations during March and April for the Grand Campaign of 1864. Meade retained command of the Army of the Potomac, his objective being Lee's Army of Northern Virginia. Grant planned to destroy Lee in the field north of Richmond. Failing this, he intended to cross the James, break the railroads which converge from the south at Petersburg, and either besiege Lee in Richmond or follow in the event of a Confederate retreat.

At dawn, May 4, Meade, marching in two columns, crossed the Rapidan and struck southward through the Wilderness. While the right, or protective flank, moved into position covering the Orange Plank Road and Orange Turnpike, two parallel highways running east across the Wilderness to Fredericksburg, Grant proposed to swing Meade's left through the lower reaches of the forest and overlap Lee's right rear.

Informed of the Federal movement at 9 a. m., May 4, Lee sent Ewell's II Corps eastward along the Turnpike into the Wilderness. Hill's III Corps followed in right echelon along the parallel Plank Road. Longstreet's I Corps hastened northeast from Gordonsville to join Hill.

Grant, apprised during the forenoon, May 5, that enemy columns were approaching Meade's protective flank, abandoned the turning movement. Warren's V Corps and Sedgwick's VI Corps were thrown piecemeal at the Confederates on the Turnpike. Meantime, Hancock's II Corps countermarched by the Brock Road and struck Hill's Corps near the Brock-Plank Road intersection. The Federals were repulsed on the Turnpike. Darkness interrupted Hancock's drive against Hill.

Reinforced during the night by the IX Corps, Grant determined to overwhelm Lee before Longstreet arrived on the field. The Federals advanced at 5 a. m., May 6. Warren and Sedgwick failed to develop an attack in force. Burnside went astray in the woods while attempting to pass between Warren and Hancock and strike Hill's rear. Hancock resumed his drive against Hill.

As Hill's battered brigades quit the field, Longstreet's veterans came into action. A swift counteroffensive stopped the Federal advance. Then a column of four Confederate brigades moved by the right along the roadbed of an unfinished railway and struck Hancock's left rear. The Federal line, as Hancock told Longstreet in later years, "rolled up like a wet blanket."

Fired with possibilities of another Chancellorsville, Longstreet rode recklessly forward to reconnoiter. Like Jackson, who was stricken just a year before in the same Wilderness by fire of his own men, Longstreet met the volley of a Virginia regiment and fell dangerously wounded. At Lee's order, Field, temporarily commanding the corps, paused to reform before moving against Hancock's reserve trenches along the Brock Road. The assault was made at 4 p. m.

Promise of another Chancellorsville had vanished. Field failed to carry the Brock Road works. At sunset, Gordon, a brigadier of Ewell's II Corps, led a surprise attack against the Federal right. But this brilliant stroke came too late for decisive results. During the night of May 7, Grant began moving by the Brock Road toward Spotsylvania Court House.

Federal strength, 118,769; losses, 15,387.

Confederate strength, 61,953; approximate losses, 11,400.

The Battle of Spotsylvania Court House

About 9 p. m., May 7, 1864, the Army of the Potomac moved by the left and south from the Wilderness toward Spotsylvania Court House. Warren's V Corps, taking the advance by way of the Brock Road, was impeded sufficiently by Fitzhugh Lee's cavalry to permit the Confederate I Corps, now commanded by Major General R. H. Anderson, which was also marching from the Wilderness, to get into position across Grant's path northwest of the courthouse.

The next morning at 8 o'clock, Warren struck Anderson's line of battle on the high ground about a mile from the courthouse and was repulsed with heavy losses. During the day, Warren was joined by Sedgwick's VI Corps, while Ewell's Confederate Corps formed on Anderson's right about 5 o'clock that afternoon, just in time to aid in the repulse of Warren's second attack on the Confederate position.

On May 9, Hancock's II Corps formed on the right of the Federal line, with Burnside's IX Corps holding the left. Late in the evening, Grant, misled by reports that Lee was withdrawing from the Federal right, sent three of Hancock's Divisions across the Po River to take Lee in left and rear. Recalled on the 10th, Hancock was attacked as he recrossed the Po by Early, who had been moved from the Confederate right to oppose his advance.

At 6 p. m., May 10, Colonel Emory Upton with 12 picked regiments of the VI Corps made the first of the Federal attacks against the U-shaped salient in the Confederate intrenched position covering Spotsylvania Court House. Striking the west face of the salient, Upton penetrated the front line held by Doles' Brigade and captured Smith's Battery but was forced to withdraw when Mott's Division (II Corps), held back by Confederate artillery, failed to support his left.

At dawn, May 12, Hancock's II Corps made a surprise attack on Ewell's Corps at the apex of the salient, capturing 20 guns and most of Johnson's Division of about 4,500 men, including its commander and Brigadier General Steuart. The Confederate artillery along this line which had been withdrawn during the night and then sent back, was overwhelmed just as it arrived, before the guns could fire a shot. Grant ordered a general advance of all his troops to prevent the dispatch of reinforcements to the Confederates at the salient. Wright's VI Corps was thrown against the west face of the salient on Hancock's right. At this point, appropriately known as the Bloody Angle, the fighting lines were so close together that the opposing troops were firing into one another's faces. The Confederates fought for more than 20 hours to regain their lost works, finally retiring about 3 a. m., May 13, to new intrenchments thrown up across the base of the original U-shaped position.

On May 18, at 4:10 a. m., Hancock attacked Lee's trenches at the base of the salient, hoping to repeat his success of the 12th, but was driven back with heavy losses, the Confederate infantry being adequately supported by artillery this time.

Late in the afternoon of May 19, Ewell's Confederate Corps, thrown across the Ni River in a reconnaissance attack against the Federal right, struck Tyler's Division of Hancock's Corps near the Harris House. The attack failed when Tyler received reinforcements. This was the last engagement at Spotsylvania Court House. On the night of May 20, Grant's army, followed by Lee, moved by the left toward the North Anna River.

Federal strength, approximately 110,000; losses, approximately 17,555.

Confederate strength, approximately 50,500; losses, unknown.

Spotsylvania to Cold Harbor

*

After receiving sufficient reinforcements by May 18 to resume the offensive, Grant determined to maneuver the Confederates out of their works at Spotsylvania Court House. In accordance with orders proceeding from this decision, Hancock's II Corps started during the night of May 21 on a circuitous march southeastward by way of Guinea and Bowling Green to take a position on the Mattapony River near Milford Station. The V, VI, and IX Corps were to move on the 22d, following the II Corps at a distance of 1 day's march.

Anticipating an attempt on Grant's part to cut the Confederate communications with Richmond, Lee promptly withdrew to the south bank of the North Anna River and occupied a position covering Hanover Junction. Here the Richmond, Fredericksburg, and Potomac Railroad intersected the Virginia Central (now the Chesapeake and Ohio), which then served as Lee's supply line.

The Confederate position was one of unusual strength—a characteristic which Grant readily recognized when he reached the North Anna and developed Lee's intrenched lines on May 23–24. Lee, the Federal commander discovered, had disposed his troops in an intrenched salient, the apex of which lay against the bottom of a U-shaped bend of the river. Within the U the Federal center was separated from both wings; thus troops from one wing must cross the river twice in order to reinforce the other. Unwilling to attack under such conditions, Grant decided to throw his forces across the Pamunkey River at Hanover Town, a point some 15 miles below the confluence of the North and South Anna Rivers and about 20 miles to the southeast of Lee's right at Hanover Junction.

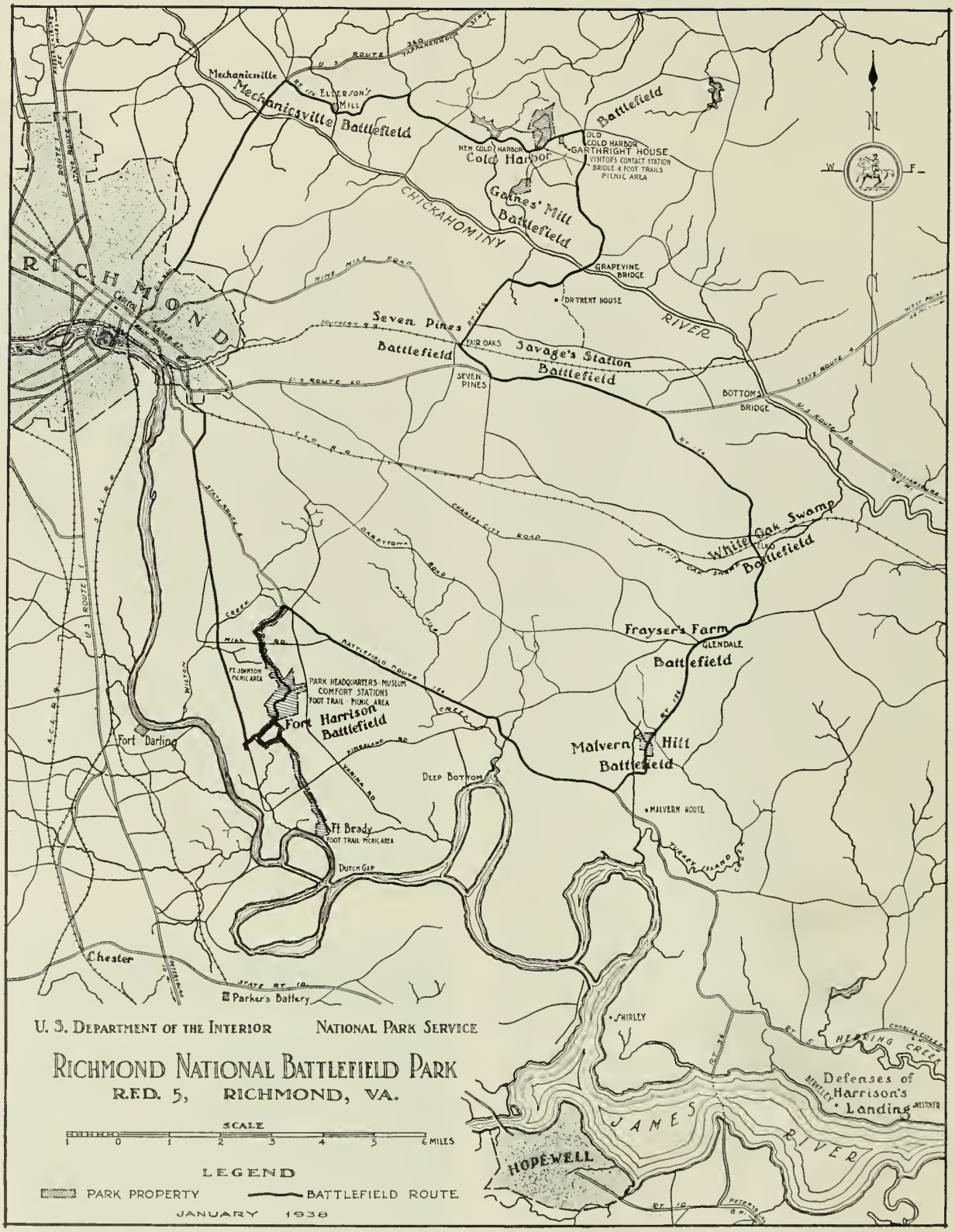
The movement began at dark, May 26. During the early morning of the 27th, Sheridan's Cavalry crossed the Pamunkey and occupied the road from Hanover Town to Atlee's Station and Richmond. By midnight of the 28th, Grant's four infantry corps were on the south side of the river.

While the Federals were securing the roads which cross the Pamunkey and converge on Richmond, Lee hastened southward via Atlee's Station to interpose between Grant and the Confederate capital. During the afternoon of May 28 he began deploying his three infantry corps along the south bank of the Totopotomoy, an east-flowing tributary of the Pamunkey which enters the latter stream about 3 miles below Hanover Town. Here on May 30 the Federals found their antagonist securely intrenched.

Disinclined to risk a frontal assault, Grant again began moving by his left around Lee's right. At this juncture W. F. Smith's XVIII Corps, Army of the James, disembarked at White House, on the Pamunkey River, and marched overland to reinforce Grant's moving flank. On May 31, Sheridan's Cavalry seized Cold Harbor.

Possession of this road center gave access to radials cutting across Lee's right rear to the Chickahominy River, whose muddy, marsh-bordered bed lay between the Confederate army and Richmond. Late in the day of June 1 the VI and XVIII Corps relieved the Federal cavalry and engaged Confederate infantry of Anderson's I Corps and Hoke's Division, which had been sent to dispute possession of the junction point. The day of June 2 was spent by both armies in closing toward Cold Harbor and preparing for the battle which burst with great violence on the morning of the 3d.

HOUSE WHERE STONEWALL JACKSON DIED


Mechanicsville
Mechanicsville Battlefield
Battlefield
OLD COLD HARBOR
GARTHRIGHT HOUSE
VISITOR'S CONTACT STATION
BRIDLE & FOOT TRAILS
PICNIC AREA
NEW COLD HARBOR
Cold Harbor
Gaines' Mill Battlefield
CHICKAHOMINY
RICHMOND
CAPITOL
GRAPEVINE BRIDGE
DR TRENT HOUSE
RIVER
Seven Pines Battlefield
FAIR OAKS
Savage's Station Battlefield
SEVEN PINES
BOTTOM'S BRIDGE
White Oak Swamp Battlefield
Frayser's Farm
GLENDALE
Battlefield
PARK HEADQUARTERS · MUSEUM
COMFORT STATIONS
FOOT TRAIL · PICNIC AREA
FT JOHNSTON PICNIC AREA
Fort Harrison Battlefield
Fort Darling
Malvern Hill Battlefield
MALVERN HOUSE
DEEP BOTTOM
Ft Brady
FOOT TRAIL PICNIC AREA
DUTCH GAP
Chester
Parker's Battery
SHIRLEY
Defenses of Harrison's Landing
JAMES RIVER
HOPEWELL
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
RICHMOND NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD PARK
R.F.D. 5, RICHMOND, VA.
SCALE
1 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 MILES
LEGEND
PARK PROPERTY
BATTLEFIELD ROUTE
JANUARY 1938

Richmond National Battlefield Park Project[2]

The Peninsula Campaign

*

After First Manassas for almost a year neither side made major advances in the East. Joseph E. Johnston's Confederate army, concentrated about Centerville and Manassas, faced Washington, where McClellan was equipping a powerful Federal army. In the Shenandoah Valley, Stonewall Jackson watched other Federal units.

Meanwhile, victories in the Western Theater of War, at Forts Henry and Donelson (February 6 and 16, 1862), cheered the Federals.

During March 1862, Johnston fell back from Manassas to the line of the Rapidan-Rappahannock, and McClellan came down Chesapeake Bay to Old Point Comfort, the eastern end of the Peninsula between the James and York Rivers.

McClellan's plan called for McDowell's detached corps, based on Fredericksburg, to move on the Confederate capital from the north, covering the right flank of McClellan as the latter advanced the 80 miles northwestward to Richmond.

Throughout April, reverses in the West, Shiloh, Island No. 10, and the loss of New Orleans, intensified Southern gloom. At this crisis, Lee formulated plans for the protection of Richmond. Johnston's troops were gradually brought to the Peninsula to help smaller Confederate forces already there resist the augmenting enemy, whom they delayed at Yorktown and Williamsburg.

In the Shenandoah Valley, Jackson, carrying out Lee's conception, routed his several antagonists and caused the Federal authorities to hold back McDowell for the safety of Washington. This both stalemated McDowell and enabled Jackson to reinforce the troops on the Peninsula in June.

By May 31, Johnston had retired before McClellan to the swampy environs of Richmond. That day he attacked the Federals on the Williamsburg Road at Seven Pines, about 6 miles east of the city, and at Fair Oaks, a mile north of Seven Pines. This drawn battle saw the wounding of Johnston and the consequent transfer of Lee to active command of the Army of Northern Virginia.

Lee decided to attack McClellan's right, under Porter, north of the Chickahominy, a tributary of the James, and thus cut McClellan from his supply base at White House on the Pamunkey, a confluent of the York. McClellan, already fearful for his communications and dismayed by the detention of McDowell, had prepared as early as June 18 to change his base to the James. After June 26, his every effort was bent in that direction.

The series of battles known as the Seven Days began with Mechanicsville, or Beaver Dam Creek, June 26, a Confederate failure. Jackson, just arrived from the Valley, did not come up in time, and Porter more than held his own. He fell back, however, southeastward to Gaines' Mill. Here, June 27, he was driven from Boatswain's Creek at severe cost to the Confederates.

Late on June 28, Lee discovered that the Federals were abandoning White House. For a time, he was uncertain as to their exact intentions. He then sought to destroy them before they could become established on the James, toward which they were evidently retreating.

June 29, the Confederates were repulsed in a rearguard action at Savage Station on the York River Railroad and June 30, while Jackson was delayed at White Oak Swamp, McClellan escaped destruction at Glendale, or Frayser's Farm.

July 1, firmly holding Malvern Hill, just north of the James, he beat off Lee's disjointed attacks and went into fortified camp at Harrison's Landing.

Lee had saved Richmond. His strategy of the entire spring counterbalanced the bad tactics of the Seven Days. But McClellan could say that the detention of McDowell had altered his plans, that he had found it necessary to change his base and had successfully done so, and that he was now in a position to put his mind to the defeat of the enemy. He did not then get that chance, however, being temporarily shelved, while Pope, "the new man from the West," was given a brief and unfortunate hour on the stage of the Eastern Theater.

Federal strength, 115,102; losses, 23,119.

Confederate strength, 69,732; losses, 28,451.

[2] From the city, park headquarters at Fort Harrison are reached by way of East Broad Street and Virginia Route 5.

The Battle of Cold Harbor

*

Federal and Confederate armies were in operation about Cold Harbor, 8 miles northeast of Richmond, in the Peninsula Campaign of 1862 and now in 1864. June 3, 1864, however, is perhaps the one day for which the name Cold Harbor is most remembered in history.

The afternoon and evening of June 2 were spent by the Federals in preparation for attack. Formed from left to right along a 2-mile front, the II, VI, and XVIII Corps were assigned the task of breaking through Lee's intrenched line. Promptly at 4:30 a. m., June 3, the attacking column went forward in a blinding mist. The II Corps burst into the enemy's trenches, only to be thrown out with heavy loss. The VI and XVIII Corps were completely repulsed. Supporting the columns of attack on the right, the V Corps was not as heavily engaged. The IX Corps, extended far to the right and touching the Old Church Road near Bethesda Church, did not participate in the general attack. Later in the day this unit made dispositions to turn the Confederate left, but Grant's inability to renew the frontal assault brought all movement to a halt.

COLD HARBOR. WARTIME SKETCH *Signal Corps U. S. Army*

Although the decisive action took place before 5 a. m., desultory fighting continued at points until noon. Once more Grant had failed to overwhelm the Army of Northern Virginia. The next several days, when men were forced to lie low in the heat and humidity, were some of the most miserable of the war.

The advantage of an intrenched position, combined with skilful use of artillery, enabled the Confederates, outnumbered two to one, to inflict on the bravely attacking Federals a loss of 7,000 casualties in less than 20 minutes of intensive fighting. Lee's total losses fell short of 1,500 men. Federal losses during this brief and frightful period of minutes surpassed those of any combat of equal duration up to that time or subsequently in the war. The Battle of Cold Harbor, coming after the carnage of Wilderness and Spotsylvania, was regarded by many people in the North as the darkest hour of the War Between the States. Defeatism was at its highest point in the North, a condition due to war-weariness and in no small measure to Grant's apparent disregard of human life.

The Union forces remained on the battlefield of Cold Harbor until June 12, but the attack of June 3 was the last attempt to destroy Lee's army in the field north of Richmond. By June 12 definite plans were completed to cross the James and seize Petersburg, focal point of Lee's communications with the deep South.

The loss of the Battle of Cold Harbor was the keenest of disappointments to Grant and his supporters, though it was not until after the war that the General acknowledged the mistake of Cold Harbor. This is revealed in Grant's *Memoirs*, in which he states, "I have always regretted that the last assault at Cold Harbor was ever made."

Federal strength, 117,343; losses, June 2–15, 12,737.

Confederate strength, approximately 60,000; losses, June 3, approximately 1,500.

The Army of the James, May 1864–April 1865

*

On April 1, 1864, at Fortress Monroe, Lieutenant General Grant outlined to Butler his plans for the coming campaign. As Meade's Army of the Potomac engaged Lee in Northern Virginia, Butler's Army of the James was to stab at the the Confederate rear by threatening Richmond.

May 5 and 6, the same days that Meade and Lee struggled in the Wilderness, Butler took City Point (Hopewell) and occupied Bermuda Hundred, the neck of land between the junction of the Appomattox and James Rivers. The next objective was Drewry's Bluff.

The James flows due south of Richmond for about 8 miles before turning in its devious eastward course. At that turn, on the west side, Fort Darling on Drewry's Bluff protected Richmond from attack by water.

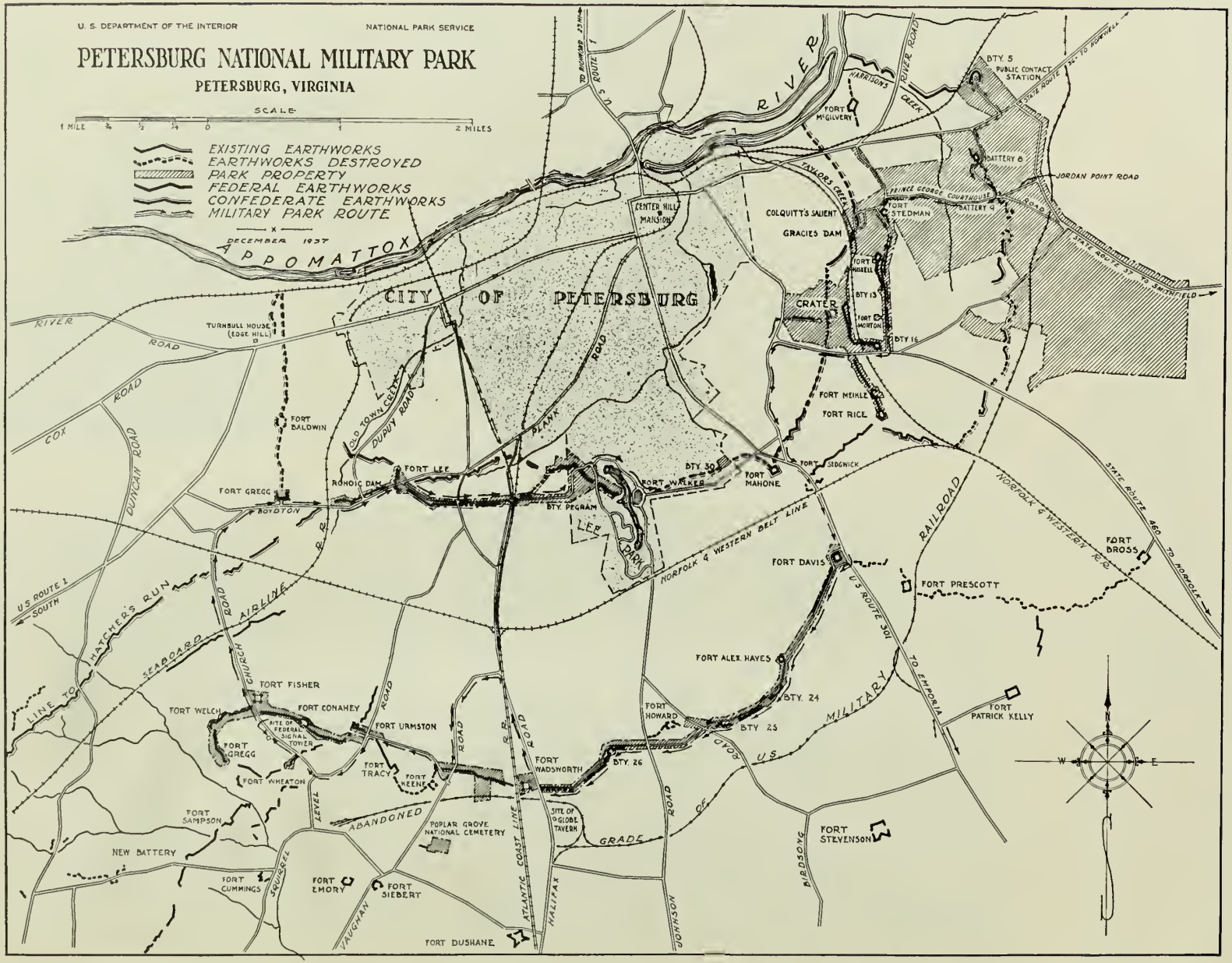
May 12, while Meade and Lee were fighting the terrible Bloody Angle Battle near Spotsylvania Court House, Butler began his movement on Richmond. During the next several days of maneuvering and fighting he was defeated by Beauregard, recently arrived from North Carolina. Fort Darling and Richmond were safe.

Butler then settled down behind his intrenched line across Bermuda Hundred. The James and Appomattox Rivers were at his back and on his flanks; Beauregard intrenched a parallel line across his front. The Army of the James was, as an officer of the time said, effectively "bottled up." Butler, however, claimed several achievements: City Point and Bermuda Hundred had been seized; the Army of the James was intrenched close to Richmond; reinforcements to Lee from Beauregard's line had been detained for more than 10 days; the Weldon Railroad had been twice cut by cavalry; traffic on the Petersburg-Richmond Railroad had been halted; and the Danville Railroad had been cut in many places.

The Army of the James not only endangered Richmond and Petersburg, but also served as a reserve force for other movements of the Union armies in the field. Grant ordered reinforcing troops for the Battle of Cold Harbor (June 1–3), and the XVIII Corps was sent to his aid. After Grant's shift to Petersburg, Butler's army was used north of the James to continue the threat against Richmond and to keep the Confederates from concentrating at Petersburg as Grant hammered them there with Meade's army. Thus the X Corps of Butler's army saw action north of the James, August 16–20, near Deep Bottom. This movement was in conjunction with action against the Weldon Railroad on the Petersburg front. Again, September 29–30, Butler made another movement north of the James, this time during the Petersburg operations of Peebles' Farm. By these pairs of movements the Confederate lines were given a severe test at widely separated points and gradually stretched almost to breaking.

In the surprise attack of September 29, known as the Battle of Chaffin's Farm (Fort Harrison and Fort Gilmer), Butler used the X and XVIII Corps and Kautz's Cavalry Division. This movement had the usual objective of cooperation with Meade and the further purpose of keeping Lee from sending reinforcements to Early in the Shenandoah Valley. The XVIII Corps broke through Richmond's outer defenses by the capture of Fort Harrison and a section of the adjacent Confederate lines, but the attack of the X Corps against Fort Gilmer failed. September 30, Confederate attempts to retake Fort Harrison were repulsed, leaving Butler's forces in possession of a 7-mile front. The Confederates then shortened their line with new intrenchments.

When the action at Five Forks, April 1, 1865, forced the Confederate abandonment of the Petersburg-Richmond lines, Butler was able to march into Richmond. The Confederates evacuated the city, April 3, 1865, while detachments of the Army of the James fought the fires left behind.


U. S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
PETERSBURG NATIONAL MILITARY PARK
PETERSBURG, VIRGINIA
SCALE
1 MILE
2 MILES
EXISTING EARTHWORKS
EARTHWORKS DESTROYED
PARK PROPERTY
FEDERAL EARTHWORKS
CONFEDERATE EARTHWORKS
MILITARY PARK ROUTE
DECEMBER 1937
APPOMATTOX RIVER
CITY OF PETERSBURG
CENTER HILL MANSION
TURNBULL HOUSE (EDGE HILL)
RIVER ROAD
COX ROAD
DUNCAN ROAD
FORT BALDWIN
OLD TOWN CREEK
DUPUY ROAD
BLANDFORD ROAD
FORT GREGG
BOYDTON P.R.
ROHOIC DAM
FORT LEE
BTY. PEGRAM
LEE PARK
FORT WALKER
BTY 30
FORT MAHONE
FORT SEDGWICK
FORT MEIKLE
FORT RICE
COLQUITT'S SALIENT
GRACIES DAM
FORT STEDMAN
BATTERY 9
BATTERY 10
BTY 13
FORT HELL
FORT HELL
BTY 15
FORT MORTON
BTY 16
CRATER
PRINCE GEORGE COURTHOUSE ROAD
JORDAN POINT ROAD
HARRISONS CREEK
RIVER ROAD
BTY. 5
PUBLIC CONTACT STATION
FORT McGILVERY
TAYLORS CREEK
NORFOLK & WESTERN BELT LINE
NORFOLK & WESTERN R.R.
RAILROAD
FORT DAVIS
FORT PRESCOTT
FORT BROSS
STATE ROUTE 460 TO NORFOLK
U.S. ROUTE 301
TO EMPORIA
MILITARY ROAD OF
FORT ALEX. HAYES
BTY. 24
FORT HOWARD
BTY 25
FORT PATRICK KELLY
FORT STEVENSON
BIRDSONG
JOHNSON
GRADE
SITE OF GLOBE TAVERN
FORT WADSWORTH
BTY. 26
POPLAR GROVE NATIONAL CEMETERY
ABANDONED
ATLANTIC COAST LINE R.R.
HALIFAX
FORT DUSHANE
FORT SIEBERT
FORT EMORY
FORT CUMMINGS
JAQUINOTT
NEW BATTERY
FORT SAMPSON
LEVEL
FORT WHEATON
FORT TRACY
FORT GREENE
FORT URMSTON
FORT WELCH
FORT CONAHEY
FORT FISHER
SITE OF FEDERAL SIGNAL TOWER
FORT GREGG
CHURCH ROAD
AIRLINE
SEABOARD
LINE TO
HATCHER'S RUN
U.S. ROUTE 1 SOUTH
TO RICHMOND 23 MILES
U.S. ROUTE 1
STATE ROUTE 5
TO NORFOLK
STATE ROUTE 10
TO SMITHFIELD
N
W
E

Petersburg National Military Park[3]

The Petersburg Campaign
June 15, 1864–April 2, 1865

Cold Harbor convinced Grant of the futility of further effort to destroy Lee's army in the field north of Richmond. The spring campaign had cost the Federals a casualty for almost every Confederate opposing them. The peace party in the North was growing until even Lincoln despaired of reelection. To achieve a sudden success, Grant planned a rapid maneuver to capture the railroads south of Richmond, thus isolating the city and its defenders. Butler's Federal army had failed to cut the railroad between Petersburg and Richmond and was now held by Beauregard "bottled up" between the James and the Appamattox. Grant determined to strike still farther south to capture the railroad junction at Petersburg before Lee could send reinforcements.

On the night of June 14, 1864, Grant's troops began crossing the James. The next day they attacked the defenders of Petersburg, numbering less than 4,000, and easily captured a mile of intrenchments before darkness and over-caution caused the attack to be suspended. Beauregard called upon Lee for help and rushed troops from north of the Appomattox in barely sufficient numbers to check, on June 15 and 16, the charges of the rapidly arriving Federals. During the night of June 17, Beauregard withdrew his hard pressed troops to a new line closer to Petersburg, where, next day, Lee's veterans were hurried into position in time to repulse a Federal attack 55,000 strong.

The plan to capture Petersburg by surprise had failed, with a loss of 10,000 men. Again confronted with Lee's intrenched army, Grant began a series of movements to encircle the city, cutting the railroads and highways. During nearly 10 months there were six of these extension movements, each involving a major battle. Despite reverses, Grant's plan was steadily carried out.

June 22, 1864. The II and VI Corps, advancing westward to capture the Weldon Railroad (Atlantic Coast Line), became separated. Slipping into the gap, Mahone's Division attacked the flank of the II Corps, taking 1,600 prisoners and routing the Federals.

July 30, 1864. The Battle of the Crater occurred.

August 18–21, 1864. Warren's V Corps captured the Weldon Railroad and, with IX Corps' support, withstood Hill's desperate counterattacks. The loss of this railroad drove food prices in Richmond and Petersburg still higher.

September 29–October 2, 1864. In the Battle of Peebles' Farm the IX and V Corps extended Grant's slowly encircling lines to the later site of Fort Welch. Here the Federals encountered earthworks running southwestwardly. To avoid attack on intrenchments Grant directed subsequent movements around this line, which Lee constantly extended.

October 27, 1864. Portions of the II, V, and IX Corps failed to get around the right of Lee's line at Burgess' Mill, due to Mahone's second success in separating two Federal corps.

February 5, 1865. The II and V Corps were checked at Hatcher's Run by a part of Hill's and Gordon's Corps.

March 25, 1865. Lee attempted to break Grant's line at Fort Stedman.

March 28–April 1, 1865. Sheridan's cavalry and Warren's Corps marched westward in a determined effort to pass Lee's right and capture the Southside Railroad. To parry this move Lee sent out about 10,000 troops under Pickett and Fitzhugh Lee. This force, on March 31, stubbornly contested the Federal advance from Dinwiddie, but next day was routed at Five Forks. By nightfall the Federals were on the Southside Railroad (Norfolk and Western), Lee's last direct line of supply.

April 2, 1865. Pressing his advantage, Grant ordered a widespread attack. Though Forts Gregg and Mahone were captured in desperate fighting, Lee's tottering defenses held long enough to cover his withdrawal, which began that night.

[3] The beginning of the Petersburg Park Tour, which includes the Crater Battlefield, is at Battery Five, 3 miles east of the city on Route 36 (Bank Street). To go to the Crater only, take Bollingbrook, Bank, or Wythe Street East, turning right at Crater Road.

The Battle of the Crater

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STARTING June 25, 1864, a Pennsylvania regiment composed mainly of coal miners dug a tunnel enabling them to place a 4-ton powder charge beneath Pegram's Confederate battery. Grant determined to follow the mine explosion with an attack for which he assembled 40,000 men.

At 3:30 a. m., July 30, the mine fuse was lighted with no result. The following hour of unexplained delay caused a demoralizing restlessness in the assault troops. At 4:15 two volunteers relighted the burned-out fuse within the tunnel, and a half hour later a great explosion destroyed the Confederate battery and nearly 300 men. Had the Federals struck at once they might have succeeded, but the leading division was disorganized by the upheaval and delayed 10 minutes before attacking. Failure to prepare passages through the Federal defenses caused further confusion. As the charge reached the Confederate line, the badly disorganized troops entered the Crater and halted, blocking the passage of subsequent attacks. The 1,200 Confederates of Elliott's Brigade, meanwhile, recovered from their initial surprise and delivered a brisk musketry fire from three sides of the break in their line.

Federal reinforcements were unable to get through the Crater but succeeded in capturing portions of the line on either side. The open ground beyond the Crater, and between it and the Federal line, was swept by Confederate artillery and infantry fire, preventing either the advance or retreat of the confused Federal troops. The Federal batteries hurled over 70 tons of shot and shell in an effort to silence the Confederate guns.

THE BATTLE OF THE CRATER, FROM THE PAINTING BY JOHN A ELDER *Virginia State Chamber of Commerce*

At about 8 a. m. the remainder of Burnside's Corps, including 4,200 Negro troops, was sent in; 15,000 men now occupied about a quarter of a mile of captured line. Under heavy fire the colored troops attempted to reform for an advance.

Meanwhile, Lee had ordered up all available troops of Mahone's Division from the line south of Petersburg. By the time the Negro troops charged, Mahone had arrived unobserved with Weisiger's Brigade, Wright's and Saunders' Brigades following, altogether about 3,000 reinforcements. Weisiger's men hurried into a ravine near the Crater, and Mahone ordered them to fix bayonets. Just then the Negro troops appeared, coming toward the Confederates. Instantly Mahone ordered a countercharge. His 800 Virginians rushed forward and with a close range volley and bayonets routed the Federals north of the Crater, many of whom fled to their lines. Others pushed in with the mass of men in the Crater.

At 11 a. m. Wright's Georgians charged from the ravine, but the Federal musketry checked them. Orders to retire were received by the Federals still in the Crater. Mahone's third brigade, Saunders' Alabamans, attacked at about 1 p. m., recapturing the Confederate line south of the Crater. The Federals in the pit were now practically surrounded; mortars were dropping shells among them at a range of only a few yards. At 2 p. m., hearing preparations for a final charge, approximately 1,000 Federals surrendered.

Federal strength, approximately 40,000; losses, 4,000.

Confederate strength, approximately 12,500; losses, 1,500.

The Battle of Fort Stedman

*

In March 1865, the situation of Lee's army was growing desperate. The campaign had become a contest in the extension of battle front, with the Confederate line more thinly manned after each extension. Farther south, the prospects of the Confederacy were no brighter as Sherman marched northward, little hindered by Johnston's weakened forces.

As a final hope, Lee proposed to abandon Richmond and Petersburg, or leave them defended by a portion of his army, and hurry southward joining forces with Johnston to defeat Sherman. The united army might then return to attack Grant.

The plan required a rapid maneuver, which would be impossible until the winter's mud should disappear from the roads. Meanwhile, Lee feared the envelopment of Petersburg on the west, forcing retreat or surrender. To forestall this he determined to break through the line east of the city, opening the way for a cavalry dash to destroy Grant's base at City Point. A successful thrust would divide the Federal army and offer an opportunity for a great victory. In any case, Lee hoped the blow would cause a concentration of Grant's forces, preventing them from surrounding Petersburg. Fort Stedman, where the Federal line was not heavily manned, was to be the striking point. Gordon, with nearly half the army, was assigned for the attack.

Before dawn, March 25, the waiting assault column was preceded by axe men, who quickly cleared the obstructions in front of Fort Stedman, and by selected men whose bayonets quietly disposed of the Federal pickets. The fort and adjacent batteries were taken in a rush and a brief hand-to-hand struggle. Gordon sent forward the remainder of his troops, about 11,000 strong, who widened the breach; but Fort Haskell and Battery Nine on the flanks of the gap turned back successive charges and poured an enfilading fire into the captured sector. As dawn revealed the target, other Federal batteries joined in a terrific bombardment.

Meanwhile, the Confederates advanced a quarter of a mile beyond Fort Stedman; but there they halted, awaiting reports from parties sent ahead to capture a supposed second line of forts. The delay was costly. There was no second line, only some light artillery and a division of Pennsylvania recruits, held in reserve. After a dashing reconnaissance, General Hartranft hurried these reserves to the field, while guns in Battery Eight (Fort Friend) fired frantically into the Confederate ranks.

The momentum of Gordon's attack was spent. A support division did not arrive. Lee, knowing that his numerical advantage would soon be lost, ordered a withdrawal. At about the same time, 7:30 a. m., Hartranft's, with other IX Corps troops, counterattacked, forcing the Confederates back. In the retreat the grey ranks suffered severely from the shelling of 40 cannon and mortars. Nearly 2,000 Confederates, reluctant to withdraw through the heavy shell fire, were captured. These prisoners were observed by President Lincoln, who had awaited the outcome of the battle nearby.

Lee's line of retreat was still open, but, with Sherman now only 130 miles away, it was more than ever doubtful whether he could go to Johnston's aid before the Federal armies should unite. At any rate, within 3 days Grant began a flank movement that forced the evacuation of Petersburg.

Federal strength, approximately 18,000; losses, 1,000.

Confederate strength, approximately 12,000; losses, 2,550.

TYPE OF FORTIFICATIONS IN THE PETERSBURG LINES. WARTIME PHOTOGRAPH *Signal Corps U. S. Army*

Appomattox National Battlefield Site Project

Petersburg to Appomattox
April 3-9, 1865

When Lee withdrew from Petersburg and Richmond, he proposed to outmarch Grant's pursuit and join Johnston against Sherman near the Virginia-Carolina boundary. In the race the Confederates had a night's start, but this was more than offset by their longer route and the lack of rations.

The Federal victory at Five Forks closed the line of retreat west from Petersburg. Therefore, to reach the Richmond and Danville Railroad at Amelia, where Lee's army was to concentrate for rations, the troops had to cross the Appomattox at Petersburg and later recross the stream. Grant was able to strike due west, reaching the Richmond and Danville Railroad in a march a third shorter than Lee's.

The Confederates left Petersburg in a spirit of near elation. They were out of the trenches and once more were to fight in the open. However, recrossing the Appomattox brought trouble. Bevil's Bridge was flooded. Longstreet and Gordon were rerouted upstream to Goode's Bridge (near U. S. 360). The pontoons ordered to Genito Crossing had not arrived, and Ewell's Corps, coming from Richmond, had to plank a railroad bridge.

Early on April 4 Lee's troops began arriving at Amelia, but the trainload of supplies was not there. Faced with starvation, the army spent a day foraging, while a frantic call for rations was sent to Danville. Next day the troops marched down the railroad hoping to meet this supply train. Seven miles away, near Jetersville, Longstreet found Sheridan's cavalry and the V Corps blocking the way. Rather than risk all on a break-through, Lee turned west in a forced night march to Farmville, where rations waited on the Southside Railroad.

Speed was now Lee's only weapon, yet the cumbersome wagon train had to be protected against constant attacks. On April 6, between Deatonsville and Farmville, Anderson and Ewell halted near Sayler's Creek to assist Gordon in defending the wagons from attacks by Sheridan and Wright. To avoid capture, the wagons, followed by Gordon, were rerouted to the north. The delay caused a gap in the Confederate column, which Sheridan's cavalry entered. Cut off from retreat, Anderson and Ewell were attacked and surrounded, losing 4,300 prisoners; and the two corps, as fighting units, virtually ceased to exist. Downstream the Federals attacked Gordon, taking 1,700 prisoners and over 300 wagons.

Early on the 7th, the remnant of Lee's army was receiving an issue of rations in Farmville, when the arrival of Federal troops forced the Confederates to withdraw across the Appomattox, burning the bridges behind them.

Again Lee's route southwest was blocked. Yet with the river protecting, the men might at least rest and eat. Then came news of Federal infantry north of the river. A bridge downstream was not destroyed, and the Federal II Corps had crossed in pursuit of Gordon. Once more Lee turned west, toward Appomattox Station. Through the 8th, the march continued, the road lined with exhausted stragglers.

Meanwhile, by a somewhat shorter route south of the Appomattox River, (U. S. 460), one Federal column was paralleling Lee's march while another pressed his rear. That night the Confederates encamped around Appomattox Court House, uncheered by food from the expected supply train. About 9 p. m., the roar of artillery announced the arrival of Federals across Lee's front, and soon the light of camp fires showed the army to be nearly surrounded. A staff council determined that the Confederate cavalry and infantry should attempt to cut a way out early next morning provided they met only cavalry or infantry in small force. On the morning of April 9, 1865, as the Confederates drove Sheridan's Cavalry back, they found the XXIV Infantry Corps in their front. Lee, therefore, sent a request to meet Grant. That afternoon the two commanders agreed upon terms of surrender for the Army of Northern Virginia.

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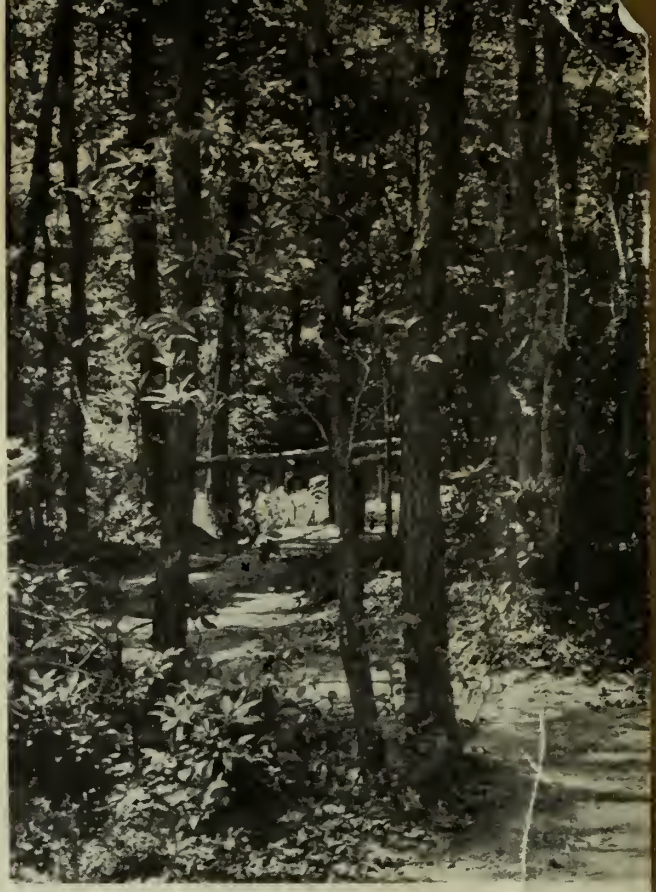

FOOT TRAIL IN WILDFLOWER PRESERVE, CHANCELLORSVILLE TYPIC
OF FOOT TRAILS IN AREAS

IDENTIFYING STRATEGIC POINTS ON MAP AT BATTERY FIVE
CONTACT STATION

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